



NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Policy Manual

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Issuance:	37-D	School Vehicle Transportation – Training	

Purpose:

This issuance establishes policy and procedures related to training Drivers, Escorts and students about safety factors on school vehicles operated by the Department of Children and Families (DCF) Office of Education (OOE).

Authority:

- 20 U.S.C. §1232g
- N.J.S.A. 18A:39-1 et seq.
- N.J.S.A. 18A:39-19.1a
- N.J.A.C. 6A:27-1 et seq
- N.J.S.A. 39:3-76.2a

Policy:

- The OOE Operations Manager and the OOE Regional Transportation Coordinator shall provide staff with technical assistance and support regarding student transportation services at the DCF Regional Schools.
- The Education Supervisor (ES), the Head Bus Driver or designee at each DCF Regional School, and the Office of Education (OOE) Regional Transportation Coordinator shall ensure that the appropriate Regional School staff are regularly and properly trained regarding all pertinent areas of student transportation and are thoroughly familiar with their roles and responsibilities in the implementation of this policy.
- Per the discretion of the ES and in the best interest of the students, drivers shall have limited access to students' educational records pertaining to safety factors and certain medical conditions.
- Drivers and escorts shall receive training in the use of a student's education records and their responsibility to ensure privacy.

- E. In accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:39-19.2, the New Jersey Department of Education developed training for Drivers and Aides on appropriate procedures for interacting with students with special needs. DCF Drivers and aides shall view this training video on proper procedures for interacting with these students. A [Certificate of Completion](#) will be kept on file at the Regional School.

Procedures:

1. School Vehicle Driver, Escort, and Student-Parent Training

1. Monthly, the Regional Transportation Coordinator shall meet with the Head Bus Driver or designee in each RS site to review procedures to ensure that there is consistency in the implementation of this policy across all RS sites.
2. Twice per calendar year, Drivers and Aides (Escorts) shall be provided training on student transportation policies and procedures, and the requirements of the Safety Education Program in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:39-19.1a, and as indicated in section "C" of this policy
 - a. Each Head Bus Driver or designee and the other individuals as indicated in section "C" of this policy, shall assume responsibility for the delivery of the training to Drivers in their RS.
 - b. The ES or designee and the Head Bus Driver or designee shall be responsible for the training of student-parents on an annual basis.
3. All new Drivers and Escorts shall complete a training period during which they shall accompany experienced personnel on the school vehicle and perform all procedures expected of a Driver or Escort. The training period shall be completed within a consecutive two-week period.
4. The Driver, escort and student-parent training program shall be conducted in accordance with this policy and shall include, but not be limited to:
 - a. Pre-service training to include classroom instruction and vehicle education while on and off the road;
 - b. Instruction in securement procedures for new Drivers, Escorts and student-parents during an initial orientation to the RS's program;
 - c. Applicable OOE policies and procedures;
 - d. Applicable State and federal transportation statutes and regulations;
 - e. Driver, Escort and student-parent roles and responsibilities;
 - f. Driver and Escort relationships with students, parents, guardians, and caregivers to include issues of maintaining strict professional conduct;
 - g. Student safety, management, and discipline on the school vehicle;
 - h. Transporting infants, toddlers, and students with disabilities;
 - i. Securement, inspection, and maintenance of wheelchairs and occupant restraint systems, including child safety restraint systems;
 - j. School vehicle maintenance, preventive maintenance procedures, inspections, and reports;
 - k. An introduction and periodic review of the manufacturer's manual for the school vehicle;

- l. Driving fundamentals including emergency driving techniques, railroad crossing procedures, detecting hazards, driving under special conditions, and a defensive driving course (required every two years);
 - m. Boarding and exiting procedures;
 - n. School vehicle stop loading zone safety;
 - o. Use of cell phones and E-Z Pass;
 - p. First aid and CPR training programs issued by the American Red Cross, the American Heart Association, or other organization which has a training program recognized by the Department of Health and Senior Services;
 - q. School vehicle accident and emergency procedures;
 - r. Procedures for reporting incidents, accidents, and emergencies;
 - s. Procedures for school-related trips;
 - t. Access to portions of student records as determined necessary by the ES for applicable students; and
 - u. Completion of the DOE online training for "Interacting with Students with Special Needs".
- 5. When a student uses a wheelchair unfamiliar to the school, the ES, Head Bus Driver, or designee shall be instructed on the proper installation, use and maintenance of the system by a representative of the manufacturer of that wheelchair securement system.
 - 6. The ES, Head Bus Driver, Drivers, Escorts, and student-parents shall be instructed, as needed, by a local safety instructor (police unit) on the proper securement of the CSRS on the seat and the proper securement of the infant or toddler in the CSRS.

2. Access to Student Records by Drivers and Escorts

- 1. Drivers and Escorts shall be considered school officials under the Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. §1232g, and thus have a legitimate educational interest to the parts of a student's record relating to transportation. These school officials may access this information without parental consent.
- 2. Legitimate educational interest is applicable whenever a school official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill their professional responsibility.
- 3. Drivers and escorts shall receive training in the use of a student's education records, and in their responsibility to ensure the privacy of the student and their records:
 - a. The ES shall provide access to that portion of a student's record which has been determined necessary to ensure the safe transportation of the student by the Driver and Escort;
 - b. The ES shall require the Driver and Escort to sign the Student Access Sheet in the student record;
 - c. The ES shall explain that information in the student record is confidential and may not be shared with others, except in the instance of a medical emergency; and

- d. The ES shall ensure that the information disclosed to the Driver and Escort is explained so they can better fulfill their obligation to safely transport students.
- 3. Safety Education Program for Drivers and Escorts**
 1. The ES, the OOE Manager of Operations, the OOE Regional Transportation Coordinator, and the school's Head Bus Driver or designee shall collaboratively develop the Safety Education Program for each Driver and Escort at the Regional School. The Safety Education Program shall address each of the following areas:
 - a. Student management and discipline;
 - b. School vehicle accident and emergency procedures;
 - c. Conducting school vehicle emergency drills;
 - d. Loading and unloading procedures;
 - e. School vehicle stop loading zone safety;
 - f. Inspecting the school vehicle for students left on board at the end of a route;
 - g. Defensive driving techniques and railroad crossing procedures; and
 - h. The use, as applicable and determined by the ES, of a student's education records. This includes the employee's responsibility to ensure the privacy of the student and the student's records.
 2. The Safety Education Program shall be provided twice per calendar year and documented on [OOE-Policy-37-D-ATT16](#), **Safety Education Program Documentation Form** for each individual Driver and Aide. The form shall be maintained by the supervisor of the Driver or Aide.
 3. Any person serving as a Substitute Driver or Aide shall also receive the Safety Education Program training twice per calendar year.

Key Terms (Definitions):

- Eligible Student means an individual, age 3 through 21 years, who is enrolled in a DCF Regional School or affiliated program.
- Eligible Infant and toddler mean a student-parent's child attending a licensed childcare center provided at a DCF Regional School.
- Student-parent means a pregnant or parenting student enrolled in a DCF Regional School Teen Education and Child Health (TEACH) program.
- Students with special needs means: student with a documented disability as outlined by the American with Disabilities Act, and outlined in the students Individualized Education Plan

Forms and Attachments:

- [OOE-Policy-37-D-ATT16](#), **Safety Education Program Documentation Form**
- [Certificate of Completion](#)

Related Information:

- N.J.A.C. 6A:27-1 et seq.

Policy History:

- Revised 9/8/2020
- Revised 5/31/2006
- New 1/6/1997